AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A casein hydrolysate ~~comprising free amino acids and peptides~~ obtained by hydrolyzing animal milk casein with a group of enzymes, ~~to have an~~ said hydrolysate comprising free amino acids and peptides, wherein the average amino acid chain length of said free amino acids and peptides in said hydrolysate is not longer than 2.1 ~~in terms of the number of~~ amino acid residues,

wherein said group of enzymes comprise peptidases capable of cleaving a peptide bond Pro-Xaa and leucine amino peptidases, and further comprises at least one of neutral protease I and neutral protease II,

wherein said peptides comprise *in vivo* indigestible peptides consisting of dipeptides having a sequence Xaa-Pro and tripeptides having a sequence Xaa-Pro-Pro, and wherein a content of said dipeptides having a sequence Xaa-Pro is not lower than 5 wt% of a total amount of the free amino acids and the peptides in the hydrolysate, and a content of said tripeptides having a sequence Xaa-Pro-Pro is not lower than 1 wt% of a total amount of the free amino acids and the peptides in the hydrolysate.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The casein hydrolysate of claim 1 for food additive or medicine.

4. (Currently amended) The casein hydrolysate of claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein said dipeptides having a sequence Xaa-Pro comprises Ile-Pro, Glu-Pro, Arg-Pro, GIn-Pro, Met-Pro, and Tyr-Pro, and said tripeptides having a sequence Xaa-Pro-Pro comprises Ser-Pro-Pro, Ile-Pro-Pro, and Val-Pro-Pro.

5. (Withdrawn) A method for preparing a casein hydrolysate of claim 1, comprising the step of (A) hydrolyzing animal milk casein to have an average chain length of not longer than 2.1 with a group of enzymes capable of digesting animal milk casein into a casein hydrolysate having an average chain length of not longer than 2.1 in terms of the number of amino acid residues.

6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 5, wherein said group of enzymes are extracellular enzymes derived from *Aspergillus oryzae.*

7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 5, wherein said hydrolyzing is performed in a one-step reaction with said group of enzymes.

8. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 5, wherein said group of enzymes is group of enzymes (X) comprising peptidases capable of cleaving a peptide bond Pro-Xaa.

9. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8, wherein said group of enzymes (X) further comprises at least one of metalloproteases and serine proteases.

10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8, wherein said group of enzymes (X) further comprises at least one of neutral protease I, neutral protease II, and leucine amino peptidases. 25

11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8, wherein said group of enzymes (X) are extracellular enzymes derived from *Aspergillus oryzae.*

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8, wherein said peptidases capable of cleaving a peptide bond Pro-Xaa are a group of enzymes 5 having isoelectric points in an acid region.

13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 5, wherein in said step (A), a casein concentration in

hydrolyzing said animal milk casein is 3 to 19 wt%, and a ratio of said group of enzymes to animal milk casein is not lower than 1/100 by mass.

14. (Canceled)

15. (New) A method of treating hypertension comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of the casein hydrolysate of claim 1.

16. (New) The casein hydrolysate of claim 1, wherein said peptidases capable of cleaving a peptide bond Pro-Xaa, leucine amino peptidases, neutral protease I, and neutral protease II are extracellular enzymes derived from *Aspergillus orzae*.